dered available as far as Nashville, at least, for a force advancing on East Tennessee by the gate of Chattanooga. But it is plain that none of these things even entered the mind of General McClellan. His head was full of his own campaign in Virginia, and nothing interested him that was not, or might not be supposed in some way to be, related to his own operations there. And, as a sort of justification for his decision, he had conjured up before his imagination a vision of an eager and grateful population, in half of the States of the Confederacy, flocking to the Union standard as soon as it should be unfurled on the mountains of East Tennessee, and of "immense results" therefrom arising.

Buell, like the good soldier that he was, accepted, without further argument, the decision of his chief. The 1st division of his army had been stationed at various points on the left of his line, and had been placed under the command of General George H. Thomas, who was recognized as one of the best officers in the service. Towards the latter part of December the Confederate force under General Zollicoffer, which had passed into Kentucky through Cumberland Gap, took up a position not far from Somerset, on the Cumberland River, and assumed a threatening attitude. General Buell

ordered Thomas to concentrate his troops and attack him. The roads were almost impassable, arid it took Thomas more than a fortnight to make a connection with the brigade that was observing Zollicoffer'a army. The Confederates themselves, fearing this concentration of the Union forces, took the offensive and attacked